

CBS EVENING NEWS  
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IRAN/SUICIDE  
ATTACKS

RATHER: Good evening. This is the CBS Evening News, Dan Rather reporting. CBS News has learned of two chilling new terrorist threats against U.S. military and Naval targets. Pentagon correspondent David Martin reports tonight that Iran is believed behind both new dangers.

MARTIN: Intelligence reports say members of Iran's revolutionary guard are being trained as pilots for possible kamikaze attacks on American ships off the coast of Iran. Pentagon officials say the Iranians have doubled the number of F-4 phantom jets based at Bandar Abbas and have begun stationing F-33 propellar plains at Chah Bahar. The F-33s are considered the more likely candidate for a suicide attack since they are more expendable and are the planes the revolutionary guards are trained to fly. In addition, U.S. Navy ships in the area have detected an unusual amount of Iran air activity, apparently designed to pinpoint their location. The aircraft carrier Ranger and nine other ships are currently in the Arabian Sea, while five more U.S. Navy vessels are operating in the Persian Gulf. Sources also say there are unconfirmed but plausible intelligence reports that Iranians have stolen U.S. military vehicles in West Germany in preparation for car bomb attacks against American military bases there. This escalating terrorist threat comes on the heels of the report by the Long Commission, which concluded that not only the Marines in Beirut but U.S. forces worldwide are unprepared to counter terrorism. PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN (Dec. 27, 1983 filmclip): The United States and its military institutions are by tradition and training inadequately equipped to deal with the fundamentally new phenomenon of state-supported terrorism.

MARTIN: But state-supported terrorism has been a direct threat to Americans at least since 1979, when the government of Iran backed the militants who seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. After the Delta commandos failed to rescue the hostages, a Pentagon-commission investigated and recommended improvements. THOMAS ROSS (Pentagon Spokesman) (Aug. 13, 1980 filmclip): ...that the counter-terrorist forces of all our military services be brought under a single command.

MARTIN: Not much else happened. Administrations changed, and the public promises to combat terrorism continued. ALEXANDER HAIG (Former Secretary of State) (Jan. 28, 1981 filmclip): This is a subject of utmost concern to this administration. It is a subject which will be high on the priority of our national security and foreign policy agenda.

MARTIN: The Delta commandos continued to train at rescuing hostages here at this fenced-in compound, but the terrorists are

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switching tactics. One member of Delta was killed when a truck bomb hit the American Embassy in Beirut. The Long commission called terrorism 'warfare on the cheap.' U.S. efforts to counter terrorism are also on the cheap. In the present Pentagon budget of \$255 billion, less than 0.1 percent goes toward combating terrorism even though it represents the most immediate threat to American lives. David Martin, CBS News, the Pentagon.